

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07856

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UN, XF, IS

SUBJECT: BRITISH VIEWS ON POSSIBILITY OF SUSPENSION OF
ISRAEL FROM UN

REF: (A) STATE 113652 (B) USUN 1551

SUMMARY. POLCOUNS DISCUSSED BRITISH VIEWS ON POSSIBLE
SUSPENSION OF ISRAEL FROM UN WITH FCO ASSISTANT UNDER
SECRETARY WEIR. HIS INITIAL REACTION WAS THAT THERE IS
NOT MUCH DANGER OF AN EFFECTIVE MOVE IN UNGA TO SUSPEND
ISRAEL BUT HE PROMISED TO STUDY U.S. QUESTIONS POSED
REFTEL AND GIVE CONSIDERED RESPONSE LATER. END SUMMARY.

1. POLITICAL COUNSELOR RAISED SUBJECT OF BRITISH VIEWS
ON POSSIBLE SUSPENSION OF ISRAEL FROM UN WITH MICHAEL
WEIR, ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY IN FCO FOR MIDDLE EAST
AND UN AFFAIRS. POLCOUNS GAVE WEIR A COPY OF THE
QUESTIONS IN REF. (A).

2. WE DESCRIBED RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN HAVANA AND
POSSIBLE SCENARIOS DESCRIBED REF. (B). WEIR SAID HE WAS
AWARE OF THE SYRIAN IDEA ABOUT WORKING FOR SUSPENSION OF
ISRAEL AS PUT FORWARD IN HAVANA BUT HIS INITIAL REACTION
WAS THAT THE MATTER PROBABLY WOULD NOT BE PURSUED
FURTHER.

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3. WEIR SAID THAT THE SUBJECT OF SUSPENSION OF ISRAEL

WAS NOT DISCUSSED IN THE KINGSTON MEETING OF THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE GENERAL IDEA OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL HAD BEEN RAISED IN AN INFORMAL WAY BY DOM MINTOFF OF MALTA BUT SAID THAT THIS WAS RECOGNIZED BY EVERYBODY AS A "BAD IDEA". HE NOTED THAT NONE OF THE COMMONWEALTH NON-ALIGNED MEMBERS ARE HAWKS ON THE ARAB-ISRAEL QUESTION.

4. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY, WEIR SAID, THAT ISRAEL COULD RUN INTO A BLATANTLY UNCONSTITUTIONAL ACTION IN THE FORM OF A UNGA VOTE OR A RULING BY THE PRESIDENT SIMILAR TO THE BOUTEFLIKA ACTION ON SOUTH AFRICA BUT THIS WOULD BE HIGHLY UNLIKELY IF EITHER THORN OR WILLISSEE IS ELECTED. WE ASKED IF BOUTEFLIKA MIGHT APPOINT A LOADED CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE AS ONE OF HIS FINAL ACTS AND THUS PAVE WAY FOR SUSPENSION. WEIR THOUGHT IT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR BOUTEFLIKA TO GET AWAY WITH SUCH AN ACTION.

5. WEIR ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WE SHOULD KEEP ALERT TO DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE SUMMER AND THAT WE SHOULD MONITOR EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE LIMA MEETING VERY CLOSELY BUT HE FELT WE SHOULD TAKE NO ACTION UNLESS IT APPEARS THAT THERE WILL BE A REAL EFFORT TO UNSEAT ISRAEL. HIS INSTINCT IS THAT IF WE GET EXCITED TOO SOON WE WILL CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE FRIGHTENED. THIS IN ITSELF WILL ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO MIGHT LIKE TO SEE ISRAEL SUSPENDED TO TRY HARDER.

6. FINALLY, WEIR SAID THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO SUSPEND ISRAEL WOULD BE TOTALLY INCONSISTENT WITH THE CONCEPT OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT. IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO HOLD GENEVA TALKS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UN IF ONE OF THE PARTIES IS NOT AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE UN. SURELY, THE RESPONSIBLE ARAB COUNTRIES WOULD SEE THE ILLOGIC OF SUCH A SITUATION.

7. IN ANY CASE, THE BRITISH WILL STUDY OUR QUESTIONS AND GIVE A CONSIDERED RESPONSE IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

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